

Message Text

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22

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 COME-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

INT-05 DODE-00 DOTE-00 FMC-01 SAL-01 CG-00 DLOS-04

OES-06 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 /048 W

----- 045706

R 121000Z APR 76

FM AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4599

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPETOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE JOHANNESBURG 0492

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ESTC, EMIN, SF, MZ

SUBJECT: US BUSINESS INTEREST IN SOUTH AFRICA CHROME ORE EXPORT
SITUATION

REF: (A) STATE 83704; (B) PRETORIA 1635; (C) JOHANNESBURG 490

1. E.W. KIRSTEN, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT TO THE GENERAL
MANAGING (OPERATING), SOUTH AFRICAN RAILWAYS AND HARBORS
(SARH), INFORMED MINERALS OFFICER SWEETWOOD APRIL 12
THAT SARH HAS NOT REPEAT NOT RECEIVED CONFIRMATION THAT
MAPUTO "PORTUGUESE HARBOR PILOTS HAVE ALL TURNED IN RESIGNATIONS"
FOR DEPARTURE "THIS SUMMER" (REF A). HE AGREED, HOWEVER,
THAT UNCONFIRMED REPORTS, RANGING FROM CLAIMS OF "A FEW
RESIGNATIONS LATER" TO A "TOTAL ELIMINATION OF ALL PORTUGUESE
PILOTS EVENTUALLY", WERE CURRENTLY CIRCULATING THROUGH
SARH (AT "LOWER ECHELONS IN THE RAILWAYS"). FINALLY,
ON THIS POINT, KIRSTEN NOTED THAT, SHOULD THE PILOT
RESIGNATION QUESTION PROVE ACCURATE, SARH WOULD "TAKE
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ALL STEPS POSSIBLE AT THE PROPER TIME" TO ATTEMPT TO ASSURE

AN UNINTERRUPTED FLOW OF SOUTH AFRICAN TRAFFIC
IN AND OUT OF THE PORT. (COMMENT: THE
ABOVE STATEMENT WAS CLEARLY INTENDED TO BE LOW
KEY AND GENERALLY NONCOMMITTAL. KIRSTEN WOULD
NOT DISCUSS, FOR EXAMPLE, OBVIOUS ADDITIONAL
QUESTIONS SUCH AS: (1) IS SARH (I.E. SAG)
PRESENTLY IN TOUCH WITH GOM ON THIS QUESTION?
(2) WHAT WOULD SARH ACTUALLY DO IF FACED
WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF MASS PILOT RESIGNATIONS
AT MAPUTO? (3) OFFER TO TRAIN REPLACEMENTS?
(4) SOME OTHER APPROACH? WE DON'T KNOW,
AND POSSIBLY SARH REALLY DOESN'T KNOW YET
EITHER; IN LIGHT OF THE POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS
THAT EXIST FOR BOTH SIDES. KIRSTEN DID,
NONETHELESS, ALMOST PRECISELY REITERATE N.P.
CAMPBELL'S STRONG POINT OF APRIL 9 (PARA 2,
REF C) -- THAT, FOR "POLITICAL EXPEDIENCIES
AT LEAST", SARH PLANS TO CONTINUE WITH ITS
POLICY TO UTILIZE MAPUTO TO THE FULLEST EXTENT
POSSIBLE; PARTICULARLY FOR CHROME ORE EXPORTS
AND OTHER HIGH PRIORITY COMMODITIES
ORIGINATING FROM THE NORTHERN TRANSVAAL.
END COMMENT.)

2. ON THE QUESTION OF SARH CONTINGENCY ROUTING
PLANS, SHOULD CONDITIONS ULTIMATELY BECOME
UNFAVORABLE FOR SOUTH AFRICAN SHIPPING AT
MAPUTO, (REFS B AND C) KIRSTEN (NOT UNEXPECTEDLY) PROVED
TO BE LESS FORTHCOMING. HE ADMITTED THAT
SARH IS "WORRIED" OVER THE FUTURE (VIS-A"-VIS
MAPUTO) AND IS INDEED CURRENTLY "FORMULATING
POSSIBLE CONTINGENCY ROUTING PLANS", BUT HE
WOULD NOT ALLOW HIMSELF TO BE PUSHED FURTHER
INTO THIS MATTER. HE STRESSED ONLY THAT THE
SITUATION IS "EXTREMELY TOUCHY" (AGAIN)
BECAUSE SAG DOES NOT REPEAT NOT WANT TO
CONVEY THE IMPRESSION "TO ANYONE" THAT
SARH DESIRES TO TERMINATE FREIGHT MOVEMENTS
THROUGH MOZAMBIQUE. AS A FOOTNOTE HE
ADDED SIMPLY THAT "WE BOTH NEED EACH OTHER".
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KIRBY

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